

Unraveling the Disappearance of Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress



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It's quite remarkable that even after several years there are still individuals who are enjoying the music released under the monikers **Parvus Decree** and **Magna Ingress**. I had no idea that there were people who actually consider themselves to be fans of the music and share the albums with others. The music has garnered a significant amount of attention online, probably due to inclusion to the soundtrack for Fallout

Equestria: Remains, which has led me to provide a comprehensive explanation of the projects' background and the reasons why the music suddenly disappeared from Free Music Archive, where it was available from 2017 to 2019.

A YouTube video featuring music by Parvus Decree.

As one of the music producers behind Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress, I will do my best to provide an objective and neutral account of the events. However, I must admit that I do not have all the information and no one else seems to be taking responsibility for picking up the loose threads. For now, this will be the only official source of information regarding the projects, until someone else involved steps up.

Decree Unearthed

To begin with, I have some exciting news for you who likes Parvus Decree (or Magna Ingress)! The entire collection of tracks created for Parvus Decree, Magna Ingress, and **Wintry Repose** (the latter being the amalgam name for the former two projects), as well as any other aliases that might have been used to refer to the same music through Discogs or other sources, can now be accessed online via **Audius**. This will hopefully remain a permanent solution for fans who have been searching for these tracks ever since their disappearance.

You may inquire, “but, where exactly is the music”? As it appears that only podcasts are available for listening and they are not downloadable. Considering the upcoming revelations, back in 2019 and 2020 it seemed like a reasonable solution to

convert all the albums into podcasts and remove all identifying labels before stashing them on Audius to prevent any form of takedown, the latter being an unfortunate possibility during that time. Also, later on, I'll delve into the rationale behind why this music was made unavailable for usage and licensing. Moreover, it was inevitable that things would turn out this way: Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress paved the way for a radical type of anonymization. We, those of us who are still around at least, believe that certain aspects of an artist's identity can be a significant hurdle to their success, and even jeopardize their physical safety. It is unfortunate, even though hardly surprising, that my country and my home state, Texas, in particular, have chosen to exploit these aspects for cheap political gain. Therefore, our goal and purpose is to preserve this music in an impartial manner, unaffected by any personal history or baggage associated with the artists. We will ensure that this music is archived for posterity, as it represents the sole legacy of these gifted individuals.

A track by Trine Nielsen released as Parvus Decree.

You may be wondering if it's disrespectful to erase an artist's personal history from their music. The answer is no. This is because it wouldn't happen without the consent of every producer involved in the projects, or their estate. The producers wanted to have a safe space for unlimited creativity and artistic expression and a safe way to interface with the outside world. The use of a collective "mask" serves as a means of protection from the degrading treatment and social stigma that are

unfortunately prevalent towards members of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. This is not an exaggerated statement, as in the year 2023 it has become an unfortunate reality. It seems that unless you are in the limelight the majority of people remain silent while a vocal minority grants themselves permission to attack, belittle, and discriminate against those who are different. While it may appear premature on my part to identify the reasons behind the projects' disappearance too soon, the truth is that pervasive and visible bigotry played a significant role in it. Also, it is possible that you are questioning whether this article will expose these artists who may have preferred to remain obscure. However, I am handling the matter with great care. I am not divulging anything that would cause these artists any discomfort, and my main objective is to assemble the various fragments of information available online in order to create a coherent narrative, and, by doing that, I am, once again, not engaging in actions that would cause discomfort for any of my fellow producers within the projects. If that were to happen, they would be the first people to give me a hard time. Although mysteries can be intriguing, there are times when they can become bothersome; therefore, it's necessary to unveil certain aspects to avoid any unnecessary confusion or frustration.

Behind the Mask

Here comes the question that's been asked many times, and one that's not easily answered. Who exactly are the individuals behind Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress? Who exactly is included in the "we" and how do they factor into the grand scheme of things? Well, let's just say the answer is not straightforward. The final product, an aforementioned podcast called MedMera, was produced by four music producers, from Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands/Egypt, and Texas. However, only two of these producers were involved in production of Wintry Repose (Parvus Decree + Magna Ingress): **Trine Nielsen**, originally from Norway, who also lived for quite some time in Sweden, and me. Simply said, MedMera includes the entire archive of Wintry Repose (with some extras) as well as contributions from like-minded individuals who sought to share their own work with us. These individuals were the other two producers, the Swede and the Dutchman living in Egypt. However, I won't delve into their details as they have made it clear that they prefer to remain out of the limelight.

A track by Trine Nielsen released as Magna Ingress.

So, Wintry Repose encompassed all the prior works that were released as Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress. And, this music had already been made available before under the individual artistic names of other producers: native Russians, ex-Soviet refugees in Europe, Russian Jews in Israel, and some others who, like me and Trine, don't have any connection with Russia or ex-USSR. In other words, there is no unique musical content attributed to the aliases Parvus Decree or Magna Ingress; *all of the material was previously accessible under the respective solo artists' names.*

Regrettably, all these producers, except Trine and me, are no longer with us, particularly those whose contributions were extensively documented through diverse YouTube video appearances, podcasts, video games, et cetera. But Trine in particular played a pivotal role in bringing Wintry Repose to fruition, as well as spearheading the development of Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress. She served as both archivist, who salvaged all these works by others from complete obscurity, and a music producer "in chief". Without her we wouldn't have gotten anywhere. So, I will be focusing on these untold stories of contributions by A. Vargas, L. Carolina* Schteinberg, Malachai "Max" Shachaf, and Trine. And myself too, even if my own contributions weren't that important in the big picture. Trine may have her own account of events, but since it's unlikely she'll share it in 2023, my version will stand as the official record. But, long story short, she was the one who led the way. Max was able to salvage Vargas's work, and Trine's gravitational pull carried Carolina*, Max, and the rest of us involved, towards making all these projects a reality.

The Legacy of Pain

A track by A. Vargas a.k.a. Seclorance, present within Parvus Decree.

The late non-binary Russian artist **A. Vargas a.k.a. Seclorance** was a significant contributor to Parvus Decree. Their artistic creations form a large portion of the project's overall body of work, and, in terms of MedMera, the majority of podcasts from episodes 001 to 071 feature their work released before under different aliases. However, *not everything within this range of MedMera podcasts is created by Vargas*. MedMera strictly adheres to the release dates, which means other contributors may find their work sandwiched between albums related to Parvus Decree. And, I'm afraid, no one can provide assistance in matching specific albums or tracks to MedMera podcasts. This is due to the fact that various albums have been released under different artist names before with varying track listings. Therefore, consolidating all content under a single umbrella was the most logical approach from the beginning, which results in an exciting journey of re-discovering the music as its intentional side effect. While it's true that there were other factors at play too, I'll delve into it later on.

The life story of Vargas was not an easy one to uncover. It was only through the album "The Legacy" by **Tribe of Astronauts** that some details about Vargas' past were hinted at. However, the story presented in the album was sometimes too vague and disjointed to make much sense. It seemed as though the authors were hesitant to reveal the full truth. From what I can gather, Vargas had a difficult time while

running the netlabel **Alter-X** with two other individuals. It appears that Vargas was ostracized by their colleagues for being non-binary, at a time when the concept was not yet widely understood or known at all. It's not surprising that there's a scarcity of information about Vargas. The harsh social climate of Russia left Vargas with no opportunity to share their own story. "The Legacy" attempts to shed light on the hardships Vargas endured in their lifetime otherwise, as told through the perspectives of Max and creatively interpreted by Trine (to whom the story was attributed), exposing instances of abuse and mistreatment. It seems that the exclusion from a supposed "artistic safe space", which Alter-X was a part of, pushed them to leave this world far too soon. One of Vargas' associates, the aforementioned Russian-born Israeli **Malachai "Max" Shachaf**, was deeply affected by their passing and took on the task of tracking down and archiving all of Vargas' work. He dedicated years to this archival project during the early 2010s, which eventually became a part of Parvus Decree. Max's own contributions to Parvus Decree were substantial too, but his band **Tuatha**'s albums did not make the cut. However, thanks to MedMera, this discrepancy was resolved.

One important point to consider here is that Tribe of Astronauts is a music project that operates under the veil of anonymity. Any artist associated with the netlabel scene can release their work under the name Tribe of Astronauts, but only if they adhere to certain guidelines. Namely, the work must be made available under a Creative Commons or Public Domain license, and the artist cannot claim any ownership or exclusive rights to the name. This means that it is uncertain whether Trine played any role in the release of the Vargas' story via Tribe of Astronauts.

Finite Sonic Journey

A track by L. Carolina* Schteinberg (a part of Ars Sonor), present within Parvus Decree.

Here goes one of the pieces of the puzzle: Max had the intention of consolidating Vargas' work into one cohesive entity, recognizing the scattered nature of Vargas' approach and the difficulty of tracking down their work otherwise. The rationale behind this entity becoming anonymous was solidified with the involvement of an additional producer, **L. Carolina* Schteinberg**. Carolina*, a queer Jewish artist with a history of gender incongruence, faced incredibly difficult circumstances when she was forced to flee Russia. She dealt with triple discrimination, as she was rejected by the Orthodox community and the Russian society at large, losing her name, job, home, citizenship, and other things that many people take for granted. Adding to her challenges, Carolina* was denied asylum five times by Sweden, the country she sought refuge in, due to the authorities claiming that the persecution she faced wasn't severe enough. In the end, she managed to secure a residence in Sweden, but some time after she seized the opportunity to relocate to France. Eventually, she made her way to the United States. The account of her journey has reached the shelves of several Swedish libraries; her work, published as **Frequency Alcyone**, can be found in a book put together by **Olga Kuznetsova**.

However, Frequency Alcyone was not solely Carolina*'s brainchild. It was also the moniker of an early, very sloppy version of Parvus Decree that featured Carolina*, Max, and Trine. Carolina* and Max connected via their one-off collaboration **Autosomal** and, later on, Max introduced her to Trine, who he had played with in Tuatha. As they got to know each other, Trine expressed an interest in joining

Carolina*'s solo project, **Ars Sonor**. Eventually, Trine became part of the band and she along with Carolina* continued to make music throughout the 2010s. Out of them all, Trine was the sole producer who had received formal training in music. She had completed music composition and production courses at the Grieg Academy in Bergen. Trine was actively involved in both **Ars Sonor** and **Tuatha**. Additionally, she published her work under various obscure aliases before joining forces with her husband, **Lauri Salminen**, to form the band **Riversky**. Trine played a vital role in keeping us all united. Her unwavering commitment and enthusiasm had a contagious effect on all of us. Despite our geographical dispersion across different countries, we maintained close ties through a private Whatsapp group. There we exchanged ideas, shared memes, and engaged in lighthearted banter. I became acquainted with this friendly little community via a fellow music producer in **Tuatha** who was deliberately omitted from this text at their request. I found myself at ease in this community because of its very queer vibe: as I was in the process of discovering my own sexuality and seeking out accepting environments, I felt a sense of belonging with Trine and "the gang".

Upon joining "the gang", I noticed Trine was delicately navigating her relationship with **Tuatha**. However, due to Carolina*'s lack of involvement at that time, Trine and **Ars Sonor** became synonymous in privacy of "the gang" with passing time, but she was not content with the "status quo". She found herself confronted with a trifecta of issues surrounding **Ars Sonor**: misogyny, transphobia, and overall xenophobia, which had all targeted the band from outside. As the political climate shifted towards Trumpism, the possibility of finding avenues to promote and sell the music became increasingly scarce. Realizing the need to revamp the band's image without losing ownership of their existing music catalog, she set out to explore options. **Frequency Alcyone** presented itself as one of the early answers to the problem at hand. Unfortunately, the name soon became associated with other unrelated matters. Trine, Carolina*, Max and I endured a series of difficult encounters with various labels and entities before finally coming together to establish a shared music archive. It was a way for us to honor our artistic contributions and leave a lasting legacy together.

The Ingress of Parvus

Initially, we chose the moniker **Parvus Decree** for our endeavor. We utilized **Free Music Archive (FMA)** as the platform for hosting the project. The choice of the name **Parvus Decree** was influenced by the controversy surrounding the Social Democrat Alexander Parvus (Israel Gelfand). The moniker also alluded to the project's

intentional semi-anonymity, achieved through a subtle rebranding that separated the music from its original source. Max had contributed the complete Vargas archive while Trine and Carolina* made sure to preserve the works of Ars Sonor. I added my own personal recordings produced over the years as well, and there was other sonic material in the mix, some from Max's friends, some from mine. However, the lion's share of the music was the work of Vargas, Max, Trine, Carolina*, and myself. All other contributors received credit within MedMera, typically towards the end of each episode. As previously mentioned, the earlier episodes of MedMera, ranging from 001 to 071, featured predominantly Vargas-centric content. Following this, episodes 072 to 153 featured a blend of musical works from Carolina*, Max, myself, and others. Episodes 154 to 171 featured collaborative work between Carolina* and Trine, with very few exceptions. Finally, the episodes numbered 172 to 200 have been exclusively devoted to Trine's work and that of her collaborators. Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress are not connected to any of the episodes that follow the 200th instalment. It's worth noting though that Trine also played a major role in creating episodes of MedMera after the 200th instalment. She collaborated closely with some producers who were left out of this text. Some of these producers started their own podcasts after the series was discontinued in 2021. The demarcation point between Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress can be pinpointed, with reference to MedMera podcasts, somewhere between episodes 169 and 171. It has to be said that Trine does not exude humility in her natural state; the moniker Magna Ingress reflected her desire to create music that reaches new heights and breaks barriers in her own unique way. In contrast, Parvus Decree was deemed too small and limiting for her.

Back in February 2018, Trine dreamed of achieving great things and making a name for herself in the music industry. With Ars Sonor neatly wrapped up she devoted herself to creating new music for her band Riversky. However, fate had other plans for Trine, and her aspirations were abruptly cut short: despite having a supportive community, Max's battle with depression was an uphill struggle that could not be easily overcome, and he took his own life in March 2018. At that time, Trine and her husband made the decision to relocate to the outskirts of Trondheim in Norway. The passing of Max and the responsibility of managing the band Tuatha weighed heavily on Trine. With no other members left in the band, Trine had to take on the role alone. Unfortunately, archiving or publishing Tuatha's music proved to be a difficult task due to the opposition from Max's estate, causing the work on Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress to come to a standstill. When Trine was too depressed to handle the

projects, Carolina* stepped in to manage them, which caused some confusion among Trine's email correspondents. At the same time Carolina* was dealing with personal challenges that added to the chaos of the situation.

Nevertheless, Trine was determined to reinvent the existing material even further while also preserving the music of Tuatha in some way. In an effort to address the lingering issue with Max's estate, she embarked on a mission to rename all the Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress material and safeguard it on Internet Archive under the moniker Wintry Repose. The name not only reflected Trine's chilly disposition at the time, but it also eliminated the "small"/"large" comparison, thereby leveling out the musical material to "freeze" it in a "timeless" dimension. Trine had planned to store all the music on Internet Archive while scouting for an alternative music platform for distribution, given that Free Music Archive was on its last legs. However, her aspirations never came to fruition in their entirety.

During the year 2019, Trine and Carolina* were confronted with an additional situation that compounded the existing weight on their shoulders. Trine, who was still grieving the loss of Max, was also dealing with the emotional fluctuations of her pregnancy. Meanwhile, Carolina* suffered a very public attack from a former collaborator, which included transphobic abuse and death threats. What made the situation even worse was that the music produced by Ars Sonor ended up being used in transphobic videos on YouTube without consent, purely for the purpose of trolling. And, despite Carolina*'s seemingly wide network of associates and well-wishers built over the years, they didn't seem to acknowledge her situation whatsoever. It was as if the silent majority had accepted the abuse and death threats as legitimate forms of expression. In the end, Carolina* decided to leave social media altogether, and Trine started documenting all the abuse with the intention of using it as evidence against the perpetrators. Surprisingly, Trine, who was gathering screenshots and exposing the perpetrators' abuse publicly, was ignored by them. Instead, they kept on attacking Carolina* relentlessly. As time passed, Carolina* began to notice an influx of malicious emails and harassing phone calls from unidentified sources. It was clear that the situation had spiraled out of control and required immediate action.

Taking Back Control (And More)

By now, you may have formed a general understanding of why the music by Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress is no longer accessible online. The decision to remove all content from FMA was made in order to prevent any further instances of personal

or creative rights abuse. Carolina* and Trine were forced to take measures to ensure their own safety. As for myself, I took on the role of nominal head of Ars Sonor, in order to dispel the unfounded rumor that “a guy in a dress” was responsible for the music. Given my past gigs as a drag queen outside of Texas, I found the association to be somewhat amusing. However, the reality was that Ars Sonor was simply a musical entity, regardless of who was behind it. I even undertook some final music-making efforts within the now-defunct band, and borrowed a few dresses from my girlfriend for the occasion ;)

On a more serious note, we realized that we needed to completely overhaul our archival project. It required a unique approach and careful planning. We created the aforementioned podcast series MedMera, which was first hosted on Internet Archive and later on Audius. Each episode (in the range 001–200) featured a remastered album that had been mixed together, with the originals being destroyed. Previously, Carolina* was the nominal head of the archival projects while Trine kept a low profile. Now, the roles were reversed, with Trine taking the lead officially and Carolina*’s name being obscured for her safety. Additionally, all Tuatha albums were finally made available in some form, and two new producers, both associates of Trine, joined the project to further blur the lines by contributing their own archival music to the podcast series.

You may wonder why we chose to produce podcasts on Audius, of all places. In our case, Trine, myself, and two other producers utilized the concept of “fair use” to carefully navigate the production of our podcast, ensuring a balance between anonymity and proper attribution. Also, Audius so far offers the advantage of content not being taken down for any reason, and, as early adopters in the “Gold” tier, we have secured our voice in any potential conflicts. In light of the fact that we have lost control over music usage, even within Parvus Decree and Magna Ingress, as it is now considered public domain and anyone could claim ownership of the music, we have taken back control over the music by producing MedMera. It’s worth reiterating again and again: *the music previously available as Parvus Decree or Magna Ingress doesn’t have an “official” repository other than MedMera, where it’s not and won’t be available for licensing or use in any form.* On the other hand, we no longer hold control over this music and any use of it through unofficial sources is done at your own risk. Moreover, we have been made aware that the music has been flagged on YouTube and that someone else, who is not affiliated with us, has claimed ownership of it. *No one associated with Parvus Decree or Magna Ingress, whether officially or unofficially, has the authority to speak or act on behalf of these entities,*

particularly since 2019. As one of the producers behind *MedMera* though, I am the designated point of contact for any inquiries you may have.

It could be argued that the resolution of these issues was fueled by spite. Trine asserts that using music solely for personal enjoyment, without offering support to the producers, and failing to speak up during difficult times for them, such as the events of 2019, renders one undeserving of using said music. However, even minor alterations such as the removal of potentially divisive labeling, as seen in the case of *Parvus Decree*, can lead to increased acceptance of the work in question. The main objective is to extend the reach of music to a wider audience, including those who may not otherwise be interested, due to the fact that the ambient and cinematic nature of the content is free of any controversial elements per se. This is exactly why we are unable to assist in matching specific albums or tracks to *MedMera* podcasts: those who inflict harm often disregard the music itself, and instead target those who are susceptible to their abuse. Without the context provided by labeling, the true nature of the content in podcasts can be difficult to discern. This lack of context with radical anonymity allows listeners to approach the music with a fresh perspective, unencumbered by the negative associations often brought to mind by homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, or xenophobia otherwise. Win-win?

Any Future?

Do any of us who were once part of *Parvus Decree* and *Magna Ingress* have a future in music? What endeavors are we pursuing these days? It's a question that is loaded with heaviness, simply because the "us" no longer exists. The fact that our music was discovered and appreciated by people highlights the significance of platforms like FMA in promoting new music. Yet, it's also worth noting that usage of such platforms can have both positive and negative consequences, as we've come to realize. Nevertheless, if not for these platforms, our music might have been lost to obscurity.

The music released as *Parvus Decree* and *Magna Ingress* has been described as tense by many, and rightly so. It captures the struggles and conflicts that the producers were constantly facing both internally and externally. It's a challenging road for artists who produce experimental music to break through in the industry. Unfortunately, the road is even harder for those who are met with any form of bigotry. Despite having supportive people around them, the challenges can become overwhelming. In the year 2021, Carolina* tragically passed away, and Trine made the decision to step away from the *MedMera* series and music-making altogether.

The devastating loss of her two close friends had a profound and lasting impact on her. Rumors are circulating that she may be involved with Tribe of Astronauts, but apart from that, there has been no word from her since late 2021. Perhaps she finds solace in contributing to the scene anonymously, allowing her to participate in the music community without added pressure or scrutiny. Hopefully, she is taking time to prioritize her own mental health and find ways to cope with the grief. It's possible though that Trine is still taking screenshots of the abuse, but this could make it more difficult for her to cope with the emotional toll. The person responsible for the abuse has not stopped attacking Carolina*, even in March of 2023, accusing her of faking her death and living under a different name. If Carolina* were still alive and in hiding, it seems likely that the perpetrator would have been caught and punished by now. However, it appears that the abuser's main goal is to inflict further suffering upon Trine, tormenting her and pushing her toward self-harm. It's important to note that Carolina*'s final resting place is known and it's not in Kansas. As for Trine, I hope that Lauri or anyone else close to her can provide her with the necessary care.

And that, my friends, is how it all came to a close. Three of the producers “joined the harmonics”, while the remaining two, including myself, quietly stepped away from the spotlight. I've since shifted my focus to other creative pursuits beyond music. Meanwhile, those two individuals I've left out of this little tale of ours are still very much in the game. Personally though, this undertaking has become quite an ordeal for everyone involved and came to bite us all in the a**. Recently, a fellow MedMera producer confided in me about their grievances with a certain record label that had dropped them and erased their name from all past albums and productions they had contributed to, which seemed incredibly vindictive. I am uncertain whether they were dragged down by our collective misadventure or if they simply had an unlucky encounter with a spiteful a**hole, but, regardless, it is clear that we must move on from the past and leave it behind. This is the essence of why I have shared this story.

Feel free to reach out to me regarding any inquiries related to MedMera, as well as Parvus Decree/Magna Ingress by proxy. I cannot promise a prompt response as I seldom check this email address. Nevertheless, I will make sure to reply in due time. I apologize in advance for any grammatical or stylistic errors in the text, but, despite any flaws, the intended message should still be conveyed with clarity.

[UPDATE / Jan 27th, 2024] On another note, Audius has revealed its ephemerality, as the discovery of archive rot resulted in a loss of 20% of the archive. However, the archive of MedMera, now known as **Millennium Resonance** — the rebranding paying homage to a podcast from 2006 hosted by Vargas at Podomatic — was restored completely and has been uploaded to [Permanent.org](#), Internet Archive (via proxy), and [IPFS](#). The link to Audius is kept for legacy purposes within this article.

Lately, I've been contemplating the ultimate fate of MedMera and the delicate balance we tread between censorship, cultural assimilation, the erasure of marginalized identities, and serving a stark reminder of why it is crucial to preserve these identities, shedding light on the unfortunate circumstances faced by marginalized artists who feel compelled to dilute their own identities in order to be accepted by the majority. Sometimes, I ponder whether the entire premise of this project should be dismantled by identifying all the works in the series. After all, the fragile and faint marginalized voices may have been lost completely to the passage of time. However, such an action would betray the desires of the artists who intentionally sought anonymity. Furthermore, it is essential to highlight the unreasonably high cost of acceptance, providing an example of what not to do on a larger scale for future generations. But, to be honest, given recent events, it is clear that although the struggles of certain oppressed minorities are now recognized, there will inevitably be more shocking stories unearthed with passing time. As one group loses its status as the “boogeyman”, another group inevitably will take its place. This is the nature of humanity and how it operates, and it is up to us all to navigate it.

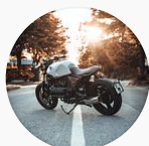
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